

In the Claims:

Please cancel Claims 2-4, without prejudice; amend Claims 1 and 5; and add new Claims 17-23 as indicated below. The status of all pending claims is as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A pneumatic tire having a tread surface having a direction of rotation of the tire which is specified in one direction, the tread surface having a center region and shoulder regions on both sides of the center region, blocks being defined in at least one of the shoulder regions by at least one first circumferential groove which extends in a circumferential direction of the tire and first lateral grooves which extend in a widthwise direction of the tire and are disposed at predetermined intervals in the tire circumferential direction,

wherein each of the blocks has a tire rotational direction side groove wall surface and a tire reverse rotation direction side groove wall surface located respectively in a front and a back of each block in the tire rotational direction and facing the first lateral grooves, the tire reverse rotation direction side groove wall surface having an inclination angle β with respect to the radial direction greater than an inclination angle α with respect to a radial direction of the tire rotational direction side groove wall surface, and

each of the blocks also has a tire rotational direction side edge portion which is chamfered so that the tire rotational direction side groove wall surface is continuously connected to a ground contact surface, and a tire reverse rotational direction side edge

portion which is not chamfered, such that the tire reverse rotation direction side edge portion has greater rigidity than the tire rotational direction side edge portion.

2-4. (Canceled)

5. (Currently Amended) A pneumatic tire according to ~~claim 4~~claim 1, wherein the inclination angle β fulfills the following relationship:

$$1.6 \alpha \leq \beta \leq 2.0 \alpha .$$

6. (Previously Presented) A pneumatic tire according to claim 1, wherein the tire rotational direction side edge portions of the blocks are chamfered in the form of circular arcs having a curvature radius of 1 to 3 mm.

7. (Previously Presented) A pneumatic tire according to claim 1, wherein the first circumferential groove is disposed between the center region and the at least one shoulder region.

8. (Previously Presented) A pneumatic tire according to claim 1, wherein the first lateral grooves extend outwardly in the tire widthwise direction from the first circumferential groove so as to incline towards the tire reverse rotation direction.

9. (Original) A pneumatic tire according to claim 7, wherein the tread surface has two first circumferential grooves, each of the first circumferential grooves being disposed between the center region and each of the shoulder regions, the first lateral grooves extending outwardly in the tire widthwise direction from each first circumferential groove so as to incline towards the tire reverse rotation direction.

10. (Original) A pneumatic tire according to claim 9, wherein two second circumferential grooves extending in the tire circumferential direction are provided on both sides of a centerline of the tire in the center region, and wherein second lateral grooves extending outwardly in the tire widthwise direction from each of the second circumferential grooves so as to incline towards the tire reverse rotation direction are disposed at predetermined intervals in the tire circumferential direction, blocks being defined by the first circumferential grooves, the second circumferential grooves and the second lateral grooves.

11. (Original) A pneumatic tire according to claim 10, wherein each second circumferential groove is composed of a plurality of circularly curved groove portions which extend in the tire circumferential direction, the groove portions being convex towards the tire centerline and connected to one another.

12. (Original) A pneumatic tire according to claim 11, wherein the second lateral grooves extend outwardly in the tire widthwise direction beyond the first circumferential groove from the connecting parts of the circularly curved groove portions.

13. (Previously Presented) A pneumatic tire according to claim 10, wherein the second lateral grooves are displaced substantially one-half of the intervals from the first lateral grooves.

14. (Original) A pneumatic tire according to claim 13, wherein the second lateral grooves extend into the blocks in the center region.

15. (Previously Presented) A pneumatic tire according to claim 10, wherein a third circumferential groove extending in the tire circumferential direction is provided on the tire centerline, a rib being defined between the third circumferential groove and each second circumferential groove.

16. (Original) A pneumatic tire according to claim 15, wherein the third circumferential groove has a groove width greater than that of each second circumferential groove, and wherein each first circumferential groove has a groove width smaller than that of each second circumferential groove.

17. (New) A pneumatic tire having a tread surface having a direction of rotation of the tire which is specified in one direction, the tread surface having a center region and shoulder regions on both sides of the center region, blocks being defined in at least one of the shoulder regions by at least one first circumferential groove which extends in a circumferential direction of the tire and first lateral grooves which extend in a widthwise direction of the tire and are disposed at predetermined intervals in the tire circumferential direction,

wherein each of the blocks has a tire rotational direction side groove wall surface and a tire reverse rotation direction side groove wall surface located respectively in a front and a back of each block in the tire rotational direction and facing the first lateral grooves, the tire reverse rotation direction side groove wall surface having an inclination angle β with respect to the radial direction greater than an inclination angle α with respect to a radial direction of the tire rotational direction side groove wall surface, and

each of the blocks also has a tire rotational direction side edge portion which is chamfered, and a tire reverse rotation direction side edge portion that has greater rigidity than the tire rotational direction side edge portion;

wherein the first circumferential groove is disposed between the center region and the at least one shoulder region;

wherein the tread surface has two first circumferential grooves, each of the first circumferential grooves being disposed between the center region and each of the shoulder

regions, the first lateral grooves extending outwardly in the tire widthwise direction from each first circumferential groove so as to incline towards the tire reverse rotation direction;

wherein two second circumferential grooves extending in the tire circumferential direction are provided on both sides of a centerline of the tire in the center region, and wherein second lateral grooves extending outwardly in the tire widthwise direction from each of the second circumferential grooves so as to incline towards the tire reverse rotation direction are disposed at predetermined intervals in the tire circumferential direction, blocks being defined by the first circumferential grooves, the second circumferential grooves and the second lateral grooves;

wherein each of the second circumferential grooves is composed of a plurality of circularly curved groove portions which extend in the tire circumferential direction, the groove portions being convex towards the tire centerline and connected to one another; and

wherein a third circumferential groove extending in the tire circumferential direction is provided on the tire centerline, a rib being defined between the third circumferential groove and each of the second circumferential grooves.

18. (New) A pneumatic tire according to claim 17,

wherein the inclination angle β fulfills the following relationship:

$$1.6 \alpha \leq \beta \leq 2.0 \alpha, \text{ and}$$

wherein the tire rotational direction side edge portions of the blocks are chamfered in the form of circular arcs having a curvature radius of 1 to 3 mm.

19. (New) A pneumatic tire according to claim 17, wherein the first lateral grooves extend outwardly in the tire widthwise direction from the first circumferential groove so as to incline towards the tire reverse rotation direction.

20. (New) A pneumatic tire according to claim 17, wherein the second lateral grooves extend outwardly in the tire widthwise direction beyond the first circumferential groove from the connecting parts of the circularly curved groove portions.

21. (New) A pneumatic tire according to claim 17, wherein the second lateral grooves are displaced substantially one-half of the intervals from the first lateral grooves.

22. (New) A pneumatic tire according to claim 17, wherein the second lateral grooves extend into the blocks in the center region.

23. (New) A pneumatic tire according to claim 17, wherein the third circumferential groove has a groove width greater than that of each second circumferential groove, and wherein each first circumferential groove has a groove width smaller than that of each second circumferential groove.